

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SY-05 SYE-00 FBOE-00 A-01 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 INRE-00 OPR-02 OC-06 CCO-00 SS-15
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-----025812 141814Z /50

O 141605Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3485

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 2849

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PA
SUBJECT: SECOND ANTI-U.S. DEMONSTRATIONS FIZZLES

REF: AMBASSADOR/ZIMMERMAN TELECON

1. A SECOND ANTI-U.S. DEMONSTRATION PLANNED FOR JULY 13 EVENING
FIZZLED OUT. APPARENTLY LACK OF LEADERSHIP RUINED THE "SPONTANEITY"
OF THE OCCASION. EARLY JULY 13 AFTERNOON, THE EMBASSY BEGAN

RECEIVING REPORTS THAT ACTIVITY HAD BEGUN TO STAGE ANOTHER DEMON-
STRATION AT THE EMBASSY THAT EVENING.

2. AFTER DISCUSSING THE REPORTS WITH WASHINGTON, THE AMBASSADOR
CALLED THE INFORMATION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTENTION THROUGH
DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER BARREIRO MAFFIODO. WORD CAME BACK THAT
ALTHOUGH OFFICIALS KNEW ABOUT A STUDENT DEMONSTRATION, IT WAS NOT
GOING TO TAKE PLACE IN FRONT OF THE EMBASSY BUT RATHER A FEW BLOCKS
AWAY. BARREIRO MAFNUODO ALSO ASSURED THE AMBASSADOR THAT THE GOP
HAD ISSUED ORDERS TO CALM TENSIONS AND TO FIND A SOLUTION TO THE
PROBLEM. OUT OF COURTESY, WE ALSO REPORTED THE DEMONSTRATION PLANS
TO THE BRAZILIAN AMBASSADOR AS VICE-DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC
CORPS. HE THEN CALLED THE GOP TO STATE THAT A MEETING OF
THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS MIGHT BE CALLED TO DISCUSS THE MATTER
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BECAUSE THE CORPS DID NOT WANT EMBASSIES TO BE OBJECTS OF
ATTACKS.

3. FOR WHATEVER REASONS, PRESIDENT STROESSNER HAS OBVIOUSLY

DECIDED TO BACK OFF FROM THE CONFRONTATION APPROACH PUSHED
BY HIS HARD-LINERS. WORD WAS PASSED TO SABOTAGE THE PLANNED

DEMONSTRATION BEFORE THE EMBASSY. ALTHOUGH APPROXIMATELY 200 STUDENTS GATHERED AT THE COLORADO PARTY STUDENT FEDERATION BUILDING BEGINNING AT 5:00 P.M. JULY 13, REPORTS INDICATE THEY HAD NO ONE TO TELL THEM WHAT TO DO. AFTER MILLING AROUND FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS, THE GROUP GRADUALLY DWINDLED DOWN TO NOTHING.

4. WE CONCLUDE THAT THIS REPRESENTS A VICTORY FOR THE MORE RATIONAL ELEMENTS IN THE GOP, GAINED WITH CONSIDERABLE OUTSIDE HELP, AND SIGNALS A RETURN TO A PROPER APPROACH TO OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. WHAT IT MEANS FOR THE LAINO CASE IS LESS CLEAR AS THE GOP IS APPARENTLY CARRYING THROUGH WITH ITS PLANS TO PROSECUTE HIM ON POLITICAL CONSPIRACY CHARGES.
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